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THOMAS-MORSE AIRCRAFT CORPORATION**THOMAS-MORSE AIRCRAFT CORPORATION**

Means for Improving Airplane Performance

By Harlan D. Fowler, A. E.

Ever since the first successful airplane took to the air, with its load of one passenger and fuel for a short flight, numerous and various ideas have been suggested to create more efficient means whereby the proportion of the load used may be increased and economically transported.

The only idea that would increase the weight of the airplane was its fuel consumption. The engine which was used in the first Wright airplane in 1903 was constructed by the Wright brothers and developed 12 hp, and the weight was 182 lb. or 15.2 lb. per hp. By 1933 the average best engine gave 420 hp and weighed about 180 lb. or 0.43 lb. per hp. In this period of time fuel consumption was reduced from 0.80 lb. per hr. to 0.05 lb. per hr. The first Wright engine gave 1200 lb. which developed 12 hp. These great reductions in weight of aircraft engines and their fuel consumption has made possible the present realization of the economical and efficient airplane, although it must be conceded that aerodynamic engineering should be credited for the finally developed airplane structure, as it is known today. Further decrease in engine weight and fuel consumption is looked for in the future, but the present record on account of the inevitable sacrifice of reliability, will long continue as the result of flight material and reliability in aircraft engines.

In the attempt to keep pace with the demand for better performance it was necessary to consider the possibility of the aerofoil and the reduction of parasite resistance. The extent to which this reduction in parasite resistance has been carried is apparent in our present design of various aerofoil wings and the shortening of the fuselage and engine.

Development of aerofoils

It is evident that to obtain any appreciable increase of airplane performance and its economy, safety that the aerofoil offers the most widely developed field of airplane design. The first Wright brothers, in their first flight, had brought about a surprising and far-reaching discovery. It has always been assumed that the unloading point of an aerofoil was derived from the pressure of the air against the upper surface, whereas it was found that the upper surface carried about 75 per cent of the load (Fig. 1), and was caused by the vacuum which existed there from the motion of the air over the upper surface, and the downward motion of the lower surface. The lower surface is only subjected to pressure amounting to 25 per cent of the load. This surprising varies slightly for different angles and individually designed surfaces. This discovery soon led to the conception of more efficient aerofoils.

Wing camber is a highly sensible development and is the determining factor in the performance of an airplane. An aerofoil for load carrying is unsuitable for high speed, and vice versa. Therefore, we must compromise. It is essential that the landing speed of the airplane be sufficiently slow to permit safe landings. The higher the landing speed the more expert piloting required and the larger the landing field. The landing speed depends on the angle of incidence of the aerofoil. The lifting capacity of an aerofoil is determined from its aerodynamic characteristics. The general range of the angle of incidence through which lift may be obtained is from minus five degrees to plus sixteen degrees in which the value of the lift coefficient ranges from zero to maximum. The lift coefficient at maximum angle of incidence determines the maximum speed.

Combined High Speed with Large Load

Ordinarily, the landing speed is from 50 mph. to 60 mph., and the speed about 70 mph. Roughly this means that the maximum speed may vary from 110 mph. for load carrying planes to 160 mph. for speed aircraft. Airplanes that attain a speed of 160 mph. which has recently been attained by the *Super G* and *Stinson* and *Stinson* 80 mph. power per load carried. Thus we have engines that weight

about 800 lb. which develop 420 hp. That is a weight of 2 lb. per hp. This type of engine may be placed in a plane carrying a total of either 3300 lb. or 3800 lb. which will give a loading of 5 lb. or 20 lb. per hp., respectively. The latter load carried per hp. is the lower the maximum speed. Therefore, this is a great advantage. It is also important to know that the load must be small, with high power and short wing span, the latter condition of which will exceed a landing speed of a pneumatic nature. Now, then, can it not be possible to devise something that will permit our airplanes to carry the large load and still obtain that high speed without the sacrifice of a safe landing speed? It is this problem that is important that has been approached and it is my endeavor in this article to show how we are trying to bring about this accomplishment.

The Fundamental Formula

The fundamental formula of aerodynamics for sustentation is

$$H^2 = K_1 A V^2$$

where H^2 = the total load of the airplane
 K_1 = lift coefficient, expressed in lb. per sq. ft. mph.
 A = total area of the wings.

V = velocity of the airplane in m.p.h.

and combined with sufficient power flight will result. K_1 and V being assumed values it is evident that K_1 and A affect the velocity V which may be varied to obtain a certain combination of performance.

A is the only structural element which can be altered and it was with this that the first attempt of a mechanically controlled aerofoil wing was made.

The above law has been recognized for many years and various means were considered to alleviate this restriction. These may be divided as follows:

(a) Variable area.

(b) Variable camber.

(c) Variable angle of incidence.

(d) Aerfoil design, incorporating particular contours and adjustable positions.

(e) A combination of any one of these with the other.

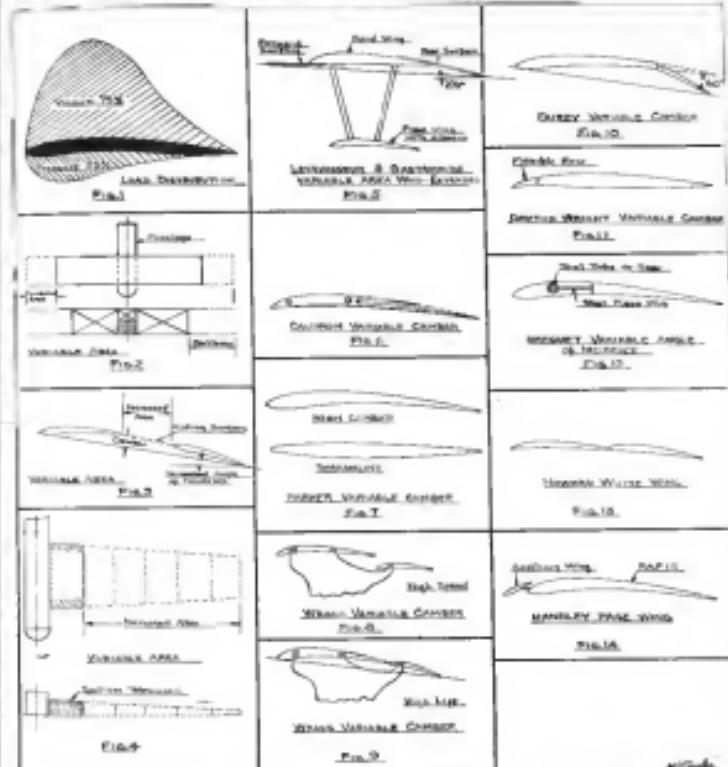
Variable Area

(a) The methods of accomplishing this are numerous, but commonly consists of extending the span of the wing as shown in Fig. 2. The disadvantage of this scheme was that in order to obtain any appreciable increase in area the span would be as great as to offer high stresses in the wing because of the result of the cantilever principle involved. The method of control was simple enough, while the increase in weight was small.

A plan was obtained recently in which two wings in tandem were placed left behind. This plan is to be filled in by shifting a surface reading from the rear of the front wing, Fig. 3. In doing this it had the advantage of increasing the camber and the angle of incidence simultaneously, which in addition to increasing A tends also to increase the value of K_1 , provided, of course, the center of the control cell is fixed. In the case of the *Super G*, the tandem principle has advised little advantage in all, and for speed purposes it did not meet the requirements.

As the result of recent investigations in thick wings a method was evolved in which the entire span was made to telescope, Fig. 4. This certainly offered an enormous possibility for increased area of the external sustentation to take care of the inevitable stresses caused by wind.

The first practical demonstration of a variable span wing was made in the latter part of 1932 at Ramon, France. It was designed by Lefebvre and Gauthier, two French



aeronautical engineers. It was fitted to a tractor biplane with a 250 hp. Hispano engine. The main feature of this design is to cause the pilot to turn the steering wheel to deflect the rear wing, Fig. 5, or the front wing, Fig. 6. The rear of the bottom wing is fixed, the upper wing alone being adjustable. The latter is composed of three parts, two of which are shifting. The middle section remains fixed, the lower one slides forward, while the upper one slides backward, Fig. 5. The chord varies from 8.0 ft. to 18.0 ft. The front panel, which is at the rear of the rear wing, carries the rear part of the rear wing, which is moved, moves backward and downward. Thus the camber varies and the angle of incidence. When fully open, the trailing edge is 12 in. below the leading edge, and the angle of incidence is increased from 5 deg. to 25 deg. The camber of the surface is made by means of cables. Its weight is 310 lb. fully loaded. Lift load (maximum) 9 lb. per sq. ft. (constant) 5.5 lb. per sq. ft. Power loading 12.4 lb. per sq. ft. Maximum speed, 125 mph. Landing speed, 27 mph. Ceiling, 25,000 ft.

Variable Camber

(b) The variable camber may next be considered. When properly proportioned, the camber of a wing is a large factor in increasing the value of the lift coefficient K_1 .

Spain to Argentine Airship Service

To Use Spanish Built Zeppelins of 6,300,000 cu. ft. Capacity

According to newspaper dispatches the long projected airship service between Spain and the Argentine Republic is to be undertaken toward the conclusion of this year. This scheme was originally sponsored by Major Eudald Herrera, a well known Spanish balloonist and aviator, who suggested about a year ago to organize between Cadiz and Buenos Aires a passenger and mail service by the use of dirigible airships of the Airco-Torres type. The ships were to be built in Spain

but already subscribed \$2 million pesos, and that the Spanish government will guarantee the payment of 5 per cent dividends. The intervention of the Spanish government in this enterprise is made possible by a new law which authorizes the expenditure of public funds for the furtherance of various promoting public utility.

Three Zeppelins are to be constructed at an approximate total cost of \$7,000,000 and about \$9,000,000 is to be spent



THE AIRSHIP STATION AT STANKE, NEAR BERNSEN, WITH THE COMMERCIAL ZEPPELIN "BREMEN" OWNED BY LUDWIG DEUTSCHE.

under the supervision of L. Torres Quevedo, the creator of the type of construction, who is a Spaniard.

Nothing appears in the Argentine newspapers, but it is now apparent that the authority of Hugo Eckener, director of the Zeppelin Air Navigation Co. ("D-Ligge"), that a passenger and express service between Spain and the Argentine Republic is to be organized in the near future, using Zeppelin airships.

Ships to be Built on Spain

An German expert, under the terms of the peace treaty, operates civil airships until he has made good the wilful destruction, after the Armistice, of seven naval Zeppelins, it is proposed to build the airships required for this service under the supervision of German experts in Spain. The Argentine experts are to be obtained from the staff of the Zeppelin works at Friedrichshafen, and the building materials are likewise to come from Germany.

For the construction of these ships and their operation, a Spanish syndicate is to be formed consisting of 50 million pesos (about \$20,000,000 at nominal value). It is stated that a group of Spanish bankers and industrialists

are interested financially. The ships are to have a capacity of 6,300,000 cu. ft., a total length of 425 ft., and a maximum speed of 100 m.p.h. They will develop a high speed of 90 m.p.h., and have accommodations for sixty passengers. Previous to this it was to be made for carrying a maximum of 300,000 postal packages and letters.

The distance between Cadiz and Buenos Aires is about 3,000 miles, and the trips are to be made in forty hours. With the current winds, the average airship flight has not as yet been measured, it seems likely that it will run by way of the Canary and Cape Verde Islands to Fernando Po, French and then to Buenos Aires. A possible alternate route would be by way of Casablanca, Mombasa, and Dakar, French West Africa. In either case the longest ocean trip will have a length of 2,000 miles, from Africa to South America.

The European Terminal

The European terminal is to be situated between Cadiz and Seville, where a large hangar will be constructed, while at Buenos Aires two sheds—one covering—will be built. It is estimated that the construction of these sheds will take about two years, although the airships are to be constructed in



THE TYPE OF PASSENGER ACCOMMODATIONS PROPOSED BY THE ZEPPELIN CO. FOR ITS LARGE COMMERCIAL AIRSHIP. THE UPPER PICTURE REPRESENTS A STATEREAM, THE LOWER PICTURE A CABIN.

First Demonstration of the Alula Wing

The long awaited demonstration of the Alula wing, for which considerable advantages were claimed by its sponsor, recently took place at Northolt, England.

It may be recalled that the Alula wing is the invention of S. H. Heissler, Mr. Holtz. The chief feature of this wing is the shape and section, bird-like in appearance, which it is claimed gives the wing a surface deflection of 15 degrees across the wing as a surface deflection parallel to the line of flight. By this means the flow of air as it is alighted that the Alula wing presents the "marginal" or real losses which occur in ordinary wings through the spilling of the air at the wing tips. Mr. Holtz,

known about corrections of the altimeter, nor about the pressure correction which makes no cause difference when musical instruments are not used.

It was noted that the machine climbed fast, as compared with the Bristol, which carried two people on its 275 hp. Rohrbach "Falcon." But, as Captain Mayers (technical editor of *The Aeroplane*, London) remarked, it was merely a demonstration of the difference between climbing with a load of 6 lb. per hp. and with 22 lb. per hp.

"After reaching 3000 ft. Mr. Kenworthy flew around for some time, doing a few rather steeply banked turns with the



THE "ALULA" MONOPLANE WHICH KENWORTHY MADE A DEMONSTRATION AT NORTHOLT, ENGLAND
Photo International

the designer of the wing, described it as having "two-dimensional air flow."

In view of these supposed features the Alula wing was deemed potentially deserving for use on an economical freight carrier and a flight to the Canadian Aeroplane Works, Sudbury, was made soon thereafter. It was to be offered to the possibilities. This company prepared drawings of a "long serial load," which was completed at the time in *AIRCRAFT JOURNAL*, but nothing further was learned from it.

The demonstration in which we are referring was carried out with the Bristol-type Stein-Gauer fitted with an Alula wing and the possibilities of this arrangement for use on passenger aircraft. The aircraft, which was a two-seat monoplane which was the Aerofit Derby, being powered with a 360 hp. Hispano-Suiza engine, but the track of the landing gear was widened from 2 ft. 8 in. to 6 ft. The wing itself, having 28 ft. 6 in. span, with an area of 165 sq. ft., is entirely built up in the form of a sandwich. The covering, of celluloid, is of single plies, and the skinning is built into the skin onto internal ribs with stretchers serving here and there along the transverse axis of the wing. There are no spars to the construction, the whole wing being deemed to act as a spar, from which it follows that it is the lower surface of the wings takes the flying load in tension. The wing, which is built in one piece, is mounted on the fuselage in cause of a single spar.

According to *The Aeroplane*, Mr. Kenworthy, the pilot took the machine off shortly on about the same distance as that required by most of the racing machines used in the Aerofit Derby and the DeHavilland contests. An aged Bristol Fighter started at the same time in order to afford the spectators a means of the speed of each of the Alula machines.

"It was noted that Mr. Kenworthy obtained 800 ft. very light on reaching 3000 ft. The flight appeared as far stated to be 22 sec., which does not prove much, for nothing was

engaged throttled down. Our arrival, however, had to make abrupt movements, and did not let his engine off fast for more than a very short period. In fact it was evident that he was racing the machine with more respect for his own safety than for the confidence on which its construction was based."

Kenworthy, Mr. Kenworthy made a careful and stable landing, after a long and arduous flight in a 3000 ft. position. The speed of landing was not materially affected by the machine, though it was heavier than Mr. James' initial landing on the "Banshee" and very much lighter than could possibly be assigned for any standard "aircraft destroyer" for use in ordinary points of the R.A.F."

French Aircraft Engine Competition

The French Committee for Aeronautical Propulsion is offering one million francs for the best new engine, which have good proof of passing satisfactory tests intended for the purpose of durability, reliability, ease of dismantling and re-erecting, and which are indispensable in a commercial engine.

We repeat that the competition is open to all, and the representatives of the present rulers of the Kingdoms of Abyssinia, Liberia, and Ivory Coast, and foreign manufacturers will be invited to compete after having undertaken to manufacture their engines in France of sufficient. The engines must be ready for test at the latest on Jan. 1, 1932.

The engine appears to be sufficiently generous to make it very likely that the inventors will receive. Even if the price per unit of endurance the engine should be considered to be a firm just about reinforced for its outlet. Production is to engage. It should also be borne in mind that a firm which produces an engine for the competition, even if not entirely winning it, would obtain a very good chance of selling a fair number, since it is scarcely likely that any one engine can be used much will satisfy.

Aviation Policy of the American Legion

RESOLUTION ADOPTED AT CONVENTION IN KANSAS CITY

Whereas aeronautics have occupied the attention of the American Legion since its first meeting;

Whereas it is the opinion of this convention that national aeronautics are becoming increasingly important to the Nation at large, both by reason of national defense and transportation and

Whereas the American Legion has twice before, viz., at its first and second annual convention, adopted resolutions endorsing a proposed separate department of aeronautics in the National Government; and

Whereas it is now apparent, because of the increased development of civilian aerial transport as apart from the various bureaus of the Federal Government are dealing with aeronautics, that it is unwise to expect the National Government to provide for the regulation of this civilian transport and maintain the proper supervision over civilian aerial traffic, chiefly because these civilian aerial activities are by nature an integral part of the national defense, national transportation and commerce;

Whereas it is apparent that the heads of the Federal Government, chiefs of all bureaus dealing with aeronautics, the aeronautics and other similar agencies in their respective departments, have been instrumental in the preparation of a proposed bill, Sen. Senate bill No 2449—introduced in the Senate of the United States August 22, 1931—creating a bureau of civilian aeronautics in the Department of Commerce to encourage and regulate the operation of civilian aircraft in interstate and foreign commerce, and for other purposes. Therefore it is

Resolved, That the American Legion, as convention assembled, recommends the early and favorable consideration on the part of both Houses of Congress of the above-mentioned bill, so far as possible.

Resolved, That the national legislature committee be instructed to urge such immediate action in Congress as upon investigation it may deem advisable, be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be prepared and forwarded to the Chairmen of the United States Senate and House of Representatives, respectively, and to the Secretary of Commerce.

THE CONTEST COMMITTEE of the AERO CLUB OF AMERICA

CONTEST COMMITTEE, AERO CLUB OF AMERICA,
31 East 39th Street, New York City

Date: _____

1. Name, grade and the Aero Club's Contest Rules for 1932, and notices of proposed aviation meets

2. Award local Club in organizing contests best adapted to the type of airports in their locality.

3. Have a record of airmen and pilots available throughout the country in times of emergency.

4. Name, address, telephone number, and telephone number of the nearest laboratory.

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Foreign Aeronautical News

China

An official Chinese circular has been issued regarding the Peking-Taipei aerial postal service which was inaugurated on July 1 and not Aug. 1, as was officially stated previously. Regulations governing the carriage of mails or parcels are briefly as follows:

1. The Peking-Taipei aerial postal service will carry such and valuable. No packages will be carried for the time being.

2. The service from Peking to Taiwan will be on Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays, while from Taiwan to Peking the service will be on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

3. Mailbags will leave Peking on the scheduled days at 8 p. m., while they will sheet on their return trip at 50-55 a. m. The journey will be covered in two and a half hours.

4. The Peking terminal station will be Nanjing temporarily, and that of Taiwan will be at Tamsui, Tsin, Taiwan.

5. Goods, including regular postage, mail or parcels carried by the service will pay airmail postage, the amount of which will be announced by the Chinese Post Office.

6. Aerial stamps will be an airmail at Post Office.

7. Ordinary mails and parcels will be received at all Post Offices, but valuable must be taken for transportation to the preparation bureau of the Peking-Shanghai aerial service administration, Peking, or either the Peking or Taiwan bureaus.

Brazil

Discussions are engaged in establishing a system of nonstop transatlantic air traffic. An agreement with Norway was recently signed, and a conference between Danish and German delegates will begin at Copenhagen for the conclusion of a convention similar to that between Brazil and the United States. The agreement will prove useful when aerial transportation, which is at present spasmodic, comes to be re-started, as it will then be no longer necessary for carriers to obtain a special permit to land on every occasion, as is now the case. Conversations on the same lines with Sweden and Finland are also being prepared.

Egypt

An air mail service between Cairo and Baghdad has recently been inaugurated by the British Royal Air Force in the Middle East. This service will run fortnightly. R.A.F. pilots and mechanics being assigned to carry official mails. The scheme is arranged as part of the regular training of the R.A.F. The whole length of the line is 848 miles, the route from Cairo being via El-Arish, Aswan and Mansura to Baghdad. A saving of ten to fourteen days will normally be effected by this service.

Holland

The air-mail service between Amsterdam and German cities has been discontinued Oct. 1 until next spring. The service between Amsterdam and Paris and Amsterdam and London, which last year was discontinued from autumn to spring, will be continued. The service between Amsterdam and Berlin, formerly the only service between Amsterdam and London, which is operated by a Dutch Company, is not financially profitable, as the Netherlands government grants it a considerable annual subsidy toward making up its deficit. The government estimate for the year 1932 makes the amount of this subsidy Ff. 370,000 (US\$48,748) at the current rate of exchange.)

Sweden

Reports from Sweden indicate that it is intended to build an air base at Göteborg, Sweden, in 1932. The base intended to be built for the exhibition is July 1-31, 1932. It is stated that the Society of British Aircraft Constructors and the Chamber Syndicale des Industries Aeronautiques (France) have been approached on the subject of participation in the exhibition and have given favorable replies. It is also hoped that Italy, Germany, Czechoslovakia and the United States will participate.



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